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ABSTRACT

Brief recommendations and resources for accommodating handicapped students in community colleges are offered. Recommendations are presented for creating an advisory board, providing support services, accommodating handicapped students in existing programs, and identifying handicapped students. Resources which are described include books and articles on administration and facilities access; ideas on where to look for federal, state, and local assistance; sources of two annotated listings on staff and program development; and a list of experienced Disabled Student Service Coordinators who have agreed to be resource persons. (DC)

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FACT SHEET: COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND HANDICAPPED STUDENTS—CONCERNS AND RESOURCES

Administrators and student service providers at many community colleges have responded with imaginative and cost effective programs to assure that large numbers of disabled students can enrich their lives and increase their career options through education and training. More than one third of the nation's postsecondary institutions are community and junior colleges. Surveys of the American college freshman by the American Council on Education show that over 50% of handicapped students enroll for credit in two year schools, a vast majority of whom choose public institutions. In addition, more enroll in the many non-credit "life enrichment" courses which community colleges offer. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and especiallly the Regulation concerning Section 504 enhances the opportunity for many disabled people to pursue postsecondary education, many of whom try this first at their local community college.

This fact sheet will help those responsible for effectively serving the college and community—especially trustees, presidents, deans of students, faculty, disabled student service coordinators, and other staff. Community colleges are moving beyond the bricks and mortar of achieving physical accessibility and, in the face of the current budget crunch, must focus on ways of meeting community needs in an efficient manner.

In the following pages some community college concerns have been indentified for discussion. Resources which could be useful in planning and choosing options are listed. The final section provides the names of selected experienced community college disabled student service leaders who might advise on particular ideas.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONCERNS

Where to Begin

Whether a campus is taking a first look at how to make its program and facility accessible or reordering priorities in the face of fiscal crises, the most important step is to name an Advisory Board on which to depend for balanced judgement. Such a Board should include representatives from various campus functions: student service, academic affairs, physical plant, and library. In addition, disabled persons, some of whom are students, should be included to assure that ideas for making the campus accessible are both necessary and cost effective. It is especially important to include leaders of such community resources as Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Education Department, Centers for Independent Living or organizations of disabled people, and the Mayor's (or County Councilor's) office. Input from a broad range of interests can assure a campus administrator of developing a realistic plan.

Appropriate Utilization of "Open Door" Policy for Handicapped Students

"Open Door" refers to the policy in a number of states which permits anyone who is a high school graduate (or equivalent) OR is eighteen years old to enroll in a community college. This policy has the potential for bringing in large numbers of students, both able bodied and handicapped, who are incapable of doing college work as it is generally understood. Several of the most serious concerns include:

To what extent must support services for disabled students be provided? Such services as tutoring, counseling, career planning, placement and other services which are available on campus for all students must be accessible for those with disabilities as well. Usually little or no adaptation of existing student services will make them available to disabled students.

What about the student—does he/she really belong in college? The disabled student has the same need as others to try to succeed in college and gain the benefits of being in an age-appropriate setting with accompanying socialization opportunities. A disabled student also has the same right as others to fail and be counseled into an appropriate option.

What about the services of readers, interpreters, notetakers, lab assistants and/or the purchase of such devices as tape recorders, automatic door open-

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ers, or electronic visual magnifiers? These auxiliary aids may be necessary to make a program, course or service accessible to some students with some disabilities. The Advisory Board can be effective in determining the necessary reasonable and non-discriminating policies concerning auxiliary aids.

Appropriate Accommodations for Academic, Technical and Vocational Programs

Accommodation for disabled students by the institution, may call for the reexamination of policies, practices, and standards so that they do not implicitly exclude a person because of his/her disability. Administrators of all programs need to identify those essential, reasonable, defensible, academic and vocational/technical standards against which all students are measured equally during the application process, course evaluation, and graduation. The resources and Disabled Student Services leaders listed below can be helpful in suggesting guidelines and examples of accommodation.

Identification of Disabled Students and Development of Support Services

As the college itself becomes more and more accessible, this information should be included in all recruitment materials including brochure and catalogue. *The community*, and especially rehabilitation counselors and veterans' service personnel, need to be educated about the variety of programs available—including services for disabled people. The wider the recruitment net, the greater will be the number of potential students. *Once on campus*, disabled students should be encouraged to voluntarily identify themselves after admissions and request and/or discuss for evaluation the support services which will enhance their chance for success. Forms placed in registration packets, available at placement interviews, and discussed during orientation activities will provide such encouragement. *In the class room* faculty can establish the appropriate avenue for requesting accommodation by announcing at the first class meeting:

> I would appreciate hearing from anyone in this class who has a handicap which may require some special accommodation. I am reasonably sure we can work out whatever arrangement is necessary. See me after class or during my office hours. Contact me this week—not after the first quarterly exam.

The actual services provided for disabled students should, whenever possible, be coordinated with those that exist for all students. There is no advantage to either the institution or the student to duplicate, for example, placement services. Only when no appropriate service exists on campus, should a new one be developed for disabled people. The resources identified below may be helpful to the administrator who coordinates student services.

Additional Concerns

Advisory boards for handicapped concerns in community colleges frequently need to develop strategies for the following areas:

- Responsibility to such underserved community groups as those who are learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded, and temporarily disabled.
- Methods of effective coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
- Development of funds for physical access and auxiliary aids.
- Delivery of services within a multi-campus structure.

RESOURCES

These books and other resources are organized to facilitate access by the topics as listed.

Administration and Facilities Access

National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) has produced the following books and articles—limited number available through the HEATH/Closer Look Resource Center (At least one copy of each was sent to each campus President. Check on campus first.):

Guide for 504 Self-Evaluation for Colleges and Universities.

Issues and Answers.

Management of Accessibility for Handicapped Students in Higher Education.

Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) has produced the books listed below. They are available by prepaying the price listed alongside each, from AAPA, 11 Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036, or G.P.O. as indicated.

Creating an Accessible Campus—$12.50.

Steps for Campus Accessibility—$5.50.

Modifying Existing Campus Buildings: Guidelines for Architects and Contractors and Accessible Products Catalogue—free from HEATH/Closer Look.

Adapting Historic Campus Buildings—Prepay $4.25 to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 (Stock No. 065-500-0034-2).

Federal, State, and Local Resources

Auxiliary Aids, a resource guide for postsecondary schools, rehabilitation agencies, and handicapped individuals is a product of the Department of Education. The guide details the Section 504 discussion of auxiliary aids and summarizes Federal programs from which money might be available. Single copies available from HEATH/Closer Look Resource Center.

Clearinghouse on the Handicapped, Room 3130 Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202 compiles directories and keeps track of federal activities relevant to handicapped people. Bimonthly newsletter, "Programs for the Handicapped," is available free by request.

Within your state, contact the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, State Director of Community Colleges, and State Director of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Consult your local or regional United Fund for a listing of disability groups who might provide advice, resources, and encouragement. Service organizations such as Kiwanis, Optimists, and Lion's clubs can often assist your school to develop a particular service or purchase unique items. Consult area Centers for Independent Living and other organizations of disabled people for a variety of ideas and cooperative efforts.

Staff and Program Development

Two annotated listings are available from the HEATH/Closer Look Resource Center which can provide useful background. The *1981 HEATH Resource Directory* summarizes the 504 Regulation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as it applies to postsecondary institutions and lists over 50 national resources. "Looking for Ways to Serve Disabled Students?" contains a selection of 30 books, pamphlets, and papers which are directed to professionals. In addition, the Center has fact sheets and packets about a number of topics which are of concern to postsecondary educators of disabled people. Contact the HEATH/Closer Look Resource Center for additional copies, for response to particular inquiries, and to receive quarterly newsletter, "Information from HEATH/Closer Look."

PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE SERVING DISABLED STUDENTS ON COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Leading Disabled Student Service Coordinators were identified and have agreed to be a resource about particular questions and ideas. You may contact them directly.

Ruben Russell, Director
Disabled Student Services
Northern Essex Community College
Elliott Street
Haverhill, MA 01830
(617) 374-0721

Colleen Fix, Director
Disabled Student Services
Miami-Dade Community College N.
Room 6113
113380 NW 27 Ave.
Miami, FL 33167
(305) 685-4542

Diane Canter, Coordinator
Disabled Students
Everett Community College
801 Wetmore Avenue
Everett, WA 98201
(206) 964-6570

Beverly McKee, Director
Resource Center for the Handicapped
San Diego Community College District
3375 Camino Del Rio
San Diego, CA 92108
(714) 230-2140

Merril Parra
Homebound Prog./Special Serv.
for the Handicapped
Queensborough Community College
Springfield Blvd and 56th Ave.
Bayside, NY 11364
(212) 631-6253

Edward L. Franklin, Director
Gallaudet College Extension Ctr.
Johnson County Community College
College Boulevard at Quivira Road
Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 677-8572

Ken Bosch
Community College of Denver
3645 W 112th Ave.
Westminster, CO 80030
(303) 466-8811

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